

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 03337 100025Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8340
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USLO RIYADH
AMEMBASY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3337

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PEPR, PLO, SY
SUBJ: FAHUM ON THE FUTURE

1. KHALID FAHUM, DURING CONSERVAION WITH OTHER
PALESTINIANS JUNE 7, DREW A DETAILED PICURE ON HOW
EVENTS MIGHT TRANSPIRE OVER COMING FEW MONTHS. WE
DON'T KNOW WHETHER FAHUM BASED HIS STATEMENTS ON FACTS
OR WISHFUL THINKING BUT SUSPECT THAT LATTER IS THE CASE.

2. ACCORDING TO REGULAR PALESTINIAN SOURCE, FAHUM SAID THAT
SAUDI ARABIA IS PLAYING THE DOMINANT ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
TODAY. IT HAD ENCOURAGED SADAT TO RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR
ARAB UNITY IN THE FACE OF ISRAEL'S NOES AND IT MOVE SYRIA TO
DROP ITS ONEROUS TERMS FOR RECONCILIATION. SAUDI ASSISTANCE
TO BOTH COUNTRIES IS BEING USED TO ENCOUAGE RECONCILIATION
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 03337 100025Z

(WE HAVE BEEN GETTING EPORTS THAT SAUDI AID TO SYRIA
HAS NOT BEEN COMING THROUGH LATE). THE SAUDIS ARE SUPPORTING
ARAFAT IN HIS BID FOR PREEMINENT POWER IN THE RESISTANCE
MOVEMENT AND IN RETURN HAVE EXTRACTED PROMISES OF COOPERATION
IN LEBANON AND IN DEVELOPING A COORDINATED ARAB STRATEGY
(THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS THAT ARAFAT MET A DETERMINED SAUDI

ARABIA DURING HIS MOST RECENT VISIT). IN SHORT, FAHUM SAID THE SAUDIS HAD SET THE STAGE FOR A SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF UNITY BY THE END OF JULY.

3. FAHUM CLAIMED THAT WITH SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT, JORDAN, SYRIA, AND ATAH UNITED NO ARAB CAN STAND AGAINST THEM. THE IRAQUIS PENCHANT FOR CAUSING TROUBLE (FOR EXAMPLE, THEIR FINANCING OF CHAMOUN, ACCORDING TO FAHUM) WILL WITHER AWAY AS THE SAUDIS USE THEIR DOMINATION OF WORLD OIL PRICES TO GUARANTEE IRAQI GOOD BEHAVIOR.

4. RENEWED ARAB SOLIDARITY WILL PERMIT ARAFAT TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOAL OF FORGIN A UNITED PALESTINIAN NATIONAL ARMY AND OF ELIMINATING ANY ELEMENTS WHICH REFUSE TO NESTLE UNDER HIS UMBRELLA. THIS WILL PERMIT A NEW STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LEBANESE AND THE PALESTINIANS. CHAMOUN, FAHUM SAID, IS NOTHING BUT A WELL-PAID GANGSTER WHO WILL FIND HIMSELF OUT-CLASSED, OUT-GUNNED, AND OUT-FINANCED BY MORE MODERATE CHRISTIANS IF HE TRIED TO MAKE TROUBLE.

5. COMMENT: IT ALL SOUNDS SO SIMPLE WHEN LISTENING TO THIS VERSION OF FAHUM. SOMEHOW, WE EXPECT THE REALITY WON'T WORK OUT QUITE THE WAY FAHUM IMAGINES.
PELLETREAU

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